



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 893

January Session, 2003

AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-16o of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2003*):

3 The state shall encourage the development of a network of school
4 readiness programs pursuant to sections 10-16p to 10-16r, inclusive, as
5 amended by this act, 10-16u and 17b-749a in order to:

6 (1) Provide open access for children to quality programs that
7 promote the health and safety of children and prepare them for formal
8 schooling;

9 (2) Provide opportunities for parents to choose among affordable
10 and accredited or approved programs;

11 (3) Encourage coordination and cooperation among programs and
12 prevent the duplication of services;

13 (4) Recognize the specific service needs and unique resources
14 available to particular municipalities and provide flexibility in the
15 implementation of programs;

16 (5) Prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delay in
17 children prior to children reaching the age of five;

18 (6) Enhance federally funded school readiness programs;

19 (7) Strengthen the family through: (A) Encouragement of parental
20 involvement in a child's development and education; and (B)
21 enhancement of a family's capacity to meet the special needs of the
22 children, including children with disabilities;

23 (8) Reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special
24 education services for school age children and to avoid grade
25 repetition;

26 (9) Assure that children with disabilities are integrated into
27 programs available to children who are not disabled and that school
28 readiness programs are appropriately reimbursed for children eligible
29 for special education and related services; and

30 (10) Improve the availability and quality of school readiness
31 programs and their coordination with the services of child care
32 providers.

33 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is
34 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
35 *1, 2003*):

36 (b) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for school
37 readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u, school
38 readiness program providers eligible for funding from the Department
39 of Education shall include local and regional boards of education,
40 regional educational service centers, family resource centers and
41 providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77, Head
42 Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that meet
43 such standards established by the Commissioner of Education. The
44 department shall establish standards for school readiness programs.
45 The standards may include, but need not be limited to, guidelines for
46 staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including preliteracy
47 development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff qualifications
48 and training, transition to school and administration. The department

49 shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills and goals for
50 children attending such programs. The commissioner, in consultation
51 with the Commissioners of Higher Education, ~~and~~ Social Services
52 and Public Health and other appropriate entities, shall develop a
53 continuing education training program for the staff of school readiness
54 programs. For purposes of this section, on and after July 1, ~~[2003]~~ 2004,
55 "staff qualifications" means there is in each classroom an individual
56 who has at least the following: (1) A credential issued by an
57 organization approved by the Commissioner of Education and nine
58 credits or more, ~~and on and after July 1, 2005, twelve credits or more,~~
59 in early childhood education or child development from an institution
60 of higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher
61 Education or regionally accredited; (2) an associate's degree in early
62 childhood education or child development from such an institution;
63 ~~[or] (3) a four-year degree with nine credits or more, and on and after~~
64 July 1, 2005, twelve credits or more, in early childhood education or
65 child development from such an institution; ~~or (4) certification~~
66 pursuant to section 10-145 with an endorsement in early childhood
67 education or special education.

68 Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 10-16q of the general statutes is
69 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
70 *1, 2003*):

71 (a) Each school readiness program shall include: (1) A plan for
72 collaboration with other community programs and services, including
73 public libraries, and for coordination of resources in order to facilitate
74 full-day and year-round child care and education programs for
75 children of working parents and parents in education or training
76 programs; (2) parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;
77 (3) (A) record-keeping policies that require documentation of the name
78 and address of each child's doctor, primary care provider and health
79 insurance company and information on whether the child is
80 immunized and has had health screens pursuant to the federal Early
81 and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program
82 under 42 USC 1396d, and (B) referrals for health services, including

83 referrals for appropriate immunizations and screenings; (4) a plan for
84 the incorporation of appropriate preliteracy practices and teacher
85 training in such practices based on the report completed by the Early
86 Reading Success Panel established pursuant to section 10-221j or other
87 practices, as determined by the Commissioner of Education; (5)
88 nutrition services; (6) referrals to family literacy programs that
89 incorporate adult basic education and provide for the promotion of
90 literacy through access to public library services; (7) admission policies
91 that promote enrollment of children from different racial, ethnic and
92 economic backgrounds and from other communities; (8) a plan of
93 transition for participating children from the school readiness program
94 to kindergarten and provide for the transfer of records from the
95 program to the kindergarten program; (9) a plan for professional
96 development for staff, including, but not limited to, training (A) in
97 preliteracy skills development, and (B) designed to assure respect for
98 racial and ethnic diversity; (10) a sliding fee scale for families
99 participating in the program pursuant to section 17b-749d; and (11) an
100 annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. On and after
101 July 1, 2000, school readiness programs shall use the assessment
102 measures developed pursuant to section 10-16s in conducting their
103 annual evaluations.

104 Sec. 4. Subsection (g) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is
105 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
106 *passage*):

107 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by
108 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
109 16u shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by
110 such town for early childhood education, provided (1) a town may use
111 the greater of (A) twenty-five thousand dollars, or (B) up to five per
112 cent but no more than fifty thousand dollars of the amount [received]
113 allocated pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
114 16u for coordination, program evaluation and administration, and (2)
115 if a town provides twenty-five thousand dollars in local funding for
116 early childhood education coordination, program evaluation and

117 administration, such town may use up to ten per cent but no more
118 than seventy-five thousand dollars of such amount for coordination,
119 program evaluation and administration. Each town that receives a
120 grant pursuant to said subsection (c) or (d) or section 10-16u shall
121 designate a person to be responsible for such coordination, program
122 evaluation and administration and to act as a liaison between the town
123 and the Departments of Education and Social Services. Each school
124 readiness program that receives funds pursuant to this section or
125 section 10-16u shall provide information to the department or the
126 school readiness council, as requested, that is necessary for purposes of
127 any school readiness program evaluation.

128 Sec. 5. Subsection (e) of section 10-16p of the general statutes is
129 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
130 *1, 2003*):

131 (e) (1) Ninety-three per cent of the amount appropriated for
132 purposes of this section shall be used for the grant program pursuant
133 to subsection (c) of this section. Priority school districts and former
134 priority school districts shall receive grants based on their proportional
135 share of the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the average
136 number of enrolled kindergarten students in each priority school
137 district and in each former priority school district for the three years
138 prior to the year the grant is to be paid, by the ratio of the average
139 percentage of free and reduced price meals for all severe need schools
140 in such district to the minimum percentage requirement for severe
141 need school eligibility, provided no such school district shall receive a
142 grant that is less than the grant it received for the prior fiscal year or a
143 grant that is less than one hundred fifty thousand dollars.

144 (2) Six and five-tenths per cent of the amount appropriated for
145 purposes of this section shall be used for the competitive grant
146 program pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

147 (3) The Department of Education may retain up to five-tenths of one
148 per cent of the amount appropriated for purposes of this section for

149 coordination, program evaluation and administration.

150 (4) If a town that is eligible for a grant pursuant to subsection (c) of
151 this section does not submit, by January first, a plan which is
152 subsequently approved for the expenditure of the entire amount of
153 funds for which such town is eligible, the department may use [up to
154 fifty per cent of] any amounts such town has not earmarked for
155 expenditure to (A) provide supplemental grants to other towns that
156 are eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, or (B)
157 enhance the system of professional development for pre-school
158 educators in programs receiving funds pursuant to this section.

159 Sec. 6. Subsection (a) of section 10-265f of the general statutes is
160 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
161 *1, 2003*):

162 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall establish, within available
163 appropriations, an early reading success grant program to assist local
164 and regional boards of education for priority school districts and
165 school districts in which priority elementary schools are located in: (1)
166 Establishing full-day kindergarten programs; (2) reducing class size in
167 grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, to not more than eighteen
168 students; and (3) establishing intensive early intervention reading
169 programs, including after-school and summer programs, for students
170 identified as being at risk of failing to learn to read by the end of first
171 grade and students in grades one to three, inclusive, who are reading
172 below grade level. Eligibility for grants pursuant to this section shall be
173 determined for a five-year period based on a school district's
174 designation as a priority school district or as a school district in which
175 a priority elementary school is located for the initial year of
176 application. In order to receive a grant, an eligible board of education
177 shall submit a plan for the expenditure of grant funds, in accordance
178 with this section, to the Department of Education, at such time and in
179 such manner as the commissioner prescribes. An eligible school district
180 may receive a grant for one or more purposes pursuant to subdivisions
181 (1) to (3), inclusive, of this subsection, provided at least fifty per cent of

182 any grant funds received by such school district are used for programs
183 pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection. School districts shall use
184 sufficient grant funds to provide professional training for teachers and
185 principals in reading instruction in programs approved by the
186 Commissioner of Education. If the commissioner determines the
187 school district is addressing the issue of early reading intervention
188 sufficiently, the commissioner may allow the school district to set aside
189 a smaller percentage of the funds received pursuant to this section for
190 such programs.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2003</i>

ED *Joint Favorable Subst.*